

The congregation grew quickly and needed a larger, more permanent space to worship. A small house and barn built the previous century was purchased in 1923. Congregation members took down the house and rebuilt the barn into a more suitable place of worship. Services began the following year and the congregation changed its name to Temple Beth-El. This change symbolized both the beginning of a more permanent congregation, as well as pride in their Town: Bethel, New York. As their tale goes deeper than the story of how a barn became temple. The story of the Sisterhood of Temple Beth-El is equally inspiring. They began in the 1940's as a small group of women who organized to provide economic support to their temple. Due to the Orthodox nature of the congregation, women and men were not allowed to sit together during worship. The women endured balcony seats during summer services and were subjected to poor ventilation and buzzing hornets for their faith. In the 1970's the congregation turned conservative, and the women were allowed to join the men on the main floor of the temple. They continued to host pancake breakfasts and barbeques to raise money for both their temple and community. They opened a second hand store to both assist the poor and their congregation.

From these humble beginnings in a barn behind a home, this congregation has grown and thrived. It has hosted more than ten rabbis, endured threats from the Ku Klux Klan, and yet persevered and remained true to the Hebrew meaning of its name, House of God.

I am especially moved by the fond memories members had not only of the services themselves, but the card parties and penny socials hosted by those involved with the temple. It is the tales of Bar Mitzvah's and weddings, births and deaths, which touch me the most. They show the extent to which the temple nourished both the spiritual and social needs of the community.

Praise is best expressed by my constituent Edward Brender in his poem, "The Barn That Became a House of Worship", which reads as follows:

The temple once a farmer's barn; part of America's rural farm
Furnished with a century-old church's pews,
yet filled with devout and dedicated Jews.

At Temple Beth-El, we like to stay with American uplifted heart's we pray.

For 75 years, the temple filled our spiritual needs, while rabbis planted righteous seeds.

The halls resounded with Chief Justice Lawrence H. Cook's praise, reminding us of Hebrew sacrifices during America's revolutionary phase.

During the time of our country's greatest need, recounting tables of Jewish patriots' deeds.

High on a majestic verdant hill stands stately Temple Beth-El; For 75 years a beacon of freedom's faith, spreading boundless love and tales to tell.

I believe that Congregation Temple Beth-El serves as an example to all Americans in our nation hoping for the simple joys of faith and family.

Mr. Speaker, I invite our colleagues to join with me in applauding this congregation for its dedication to both its faith and its community as a whole and extending our best wishes on the occasion of their 75th anniversary and

may Temple Beth-El, enjoy many more years of growth and community service.

PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, today President Clinton visited my home state of Florida to promote the Administration's education initiatives as education policy moves into the 21st Century. While we have made significant progress in recent years, there is a lot of work yet to be done. I rise today to wholeheartedly support the strengthening of public education through these initiatives. In order to meet the high education standards that we are setting for our children today, we need to provide public schools with the tools for preparing our children for the challenges of the next millennium.

Class sizes must be reduced, new teachers must be hired, and new schools must be built. Schools must also be made safer and, therefore, more conducive to learning. I believe that the expansion of charter school programs is a positive trend which will benefit children throughout the United States. Lastly, federal tax credits will be a crucial to support the renovation and modernization of our schools, many of which have become plagued by structural and age-related problems.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Administration's program for public education. In so doing, Congress will fulfill its commitment to America's future.

TRIBUTE TO CADMAN TOWERS AT 101 CLARK STREET IN BROOKLYN HEIGHTS BROOKLYN ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to the residents of Cadman Towers at 101 Clark Street in Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn on their 25th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the Towers.

For twenty-five years, families have grown and prospered in this supportive and unique community in Brooklyn Heights. Cadman Towers is the eastern border of Brooklyn's historic Brooklyn Heights neighborhood and its residents have added diversity and vitality to this already thriving area.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Cadman Towers and its three hundred residents on this milestone and wish you many happy anniversaries to come!

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT TRIES TO SHUT DOWN PEOPLE'S COMMISSION FOR EXPOSING GENOCIDE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was disturbed to learn recently that the Chief Minister of Punjab, Parkash Singh Badal, and many political leaders there are trying to outlaw the Punjab People's Commission, which is exposing the genocide against the Sikhs by the police and security forces.

The Punjab government tried to prevent the commission's first meeting by canceling the meeting space that the commission had reserved. However, one of the local Gurdwaras in Chandigarh offered its meeting space and the meeting was held anyway.

During that meeting the People's Commission issued citations in more than 90 cases against police officers who have committed atrocities against the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan. It took up more than 3,000 other cases. This shows the pattern of repression, terror, and genocide against the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan. That is why the Badal government and the political leaders there want the commission closed down.

We cannot sit idly by while this vital commission is destroyed. It is the only group within Punjab, Khalistan that is exposing the genocide. The Council of Khalistan has issued an excellent Open Letter on this issue. I urge my colleagues, especially those who are always lecturing us about how wonderful Indian democracy is, to read it carefully.

In light of the facts presented in this letter, I call on my colleagues to maintain sanctions against India and to support an internationally-supervised plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan so that the Sikhs of that troubled state can vote on whether they should chart their own course separately from Indian tyranny.

I would like to insert that Open Letter into the RECORD.

OPEN LETTER TO THE SIKH NATION
(From Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh)

SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSION—ATTACKS ON COMMISSION BY BJP, CONGRESS, AND CPI SHOW WHO IS BEHIND SIKH GENOCIDE AND DEEPEN THE SIKH NATION'S WOUNDS

To the Khalsa Panth:

The BJP, Congress, and CPI have finally exposed themselves. They have revealed their own involvement in the genocide against the Sikh Nation. They don't want the truth to come out because it will show their immoral deeds. That is why they want to shut down the Peoples' Commission. Even the Badal government seems to agree. It made every effort to prevent the commission's first meeting from occurring. It is no wonder. The commission issued 90 citations against police officers and received 3,000 more cases. Evidently it is making the political leaders of all stripes nervous. They are now shivering with fear that their part in supporting the genocide against the Sikh Nation will be exposed.

Do not let these corrupt leaders succeed in their effort to shut down the Peoples' Commission. The work that it is doing is too important to the Sikh Nation and all of humanity. The Armenians will not let the genocide against them 80 years ago be forgotten; the Jews will not let the world forget the Holocaust 50 years after it happened. How can the